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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/199,506	11/25/1998	KENNETH LAWRENCE ACCARDI	15-SV-4769	3772

7590 01/31/2006

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HOUSTON, TX 77070

EXAMINER
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CHANKONG, DOHM

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2152

DATE MAILED: 01/31/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

## Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/199,506

Applicant(s)

ACCARDI ET AL.

Examiner

Dohm Chankong

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
  - If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
  - Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 November 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 15-44 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 15-21 & 36-44 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 22-35 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

### DETAILED ACTION

- 1> This action is in response to Applicant's remarks, filed 11.14.2005.
- 2> This is a final rejection.

### *Allowable Subject Matter*

- 3> As set forth in the previous office action, filed 8.8.2005, claims 15-21 and 36-44 are allowed.

### *Response to Arguments*

- 4> Applicant's arguments with regards to independent claims 22 and 29 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues in substance: (a) the references, singly or in combination, do not disclose the claimed auto-reply functionality set forth in the independent claims; and (b) there is no motivation to combine the prior art references.

In regards to (a), Applicant's argument emphasizes that the Microsoft document discloses that not all messages will be replied to by the email system and cites page 94 in support. Applicant concludes, based on this citation, that the Microsoft document "does not teach replying automatically to service requests" because "second, third, and any further messages from any particular sender simply will not be answered" [Applicant's remarks, page 9].

However, claims 22 and 29 merely disclose that a single service request need be acknowledged, and no where in the claims is there language that requires all requests from

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the same sender need to be replied. The Microsoft document discloses that an auto reply message is mailed to each person that sends an email and this functionality reads on the functionality disclosed by the claims.

In regards to (b), Applicant's argument rests solely on an analysis of the Jago reference. But clearly, the Microsoft document provides an enhancement of Jago's messaging system, stating "when you are away from your office for any length of time, you can process your messages automatically". Such functionality would seem to improve Jago by enabling users to set up rules to automatically respond and process incoming service requests. Thus, it would have been obvious to modify Jago's messaging system to include Microsoft's auto-reply functionality such that service messages may be processed automatically even if a user is out of the office.

5> Based on the preceding remarks, the rejections of claims 22-35 set forth in the office action, filed 8.8.2005, are maintained.

#### *Conclusion*

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the

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shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dohm Chankong whose telephone number is 571.272.3942. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday [7:00 AM to 5:00 PM].

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Bunjob Jaroenchonwanit can be reached on 571.272.3913. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

DC



BUNJOB JAROENCHONWANIT  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER